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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/748,121	12/27/2000	Osamu Nakamura	0756-2247	4161

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EXAMINER

SIMKOVIC, VIKTOR

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2812

DATE MAILED: 04/14/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/748,121	NAKAMURA ET AL.
	Examiner Viktor Simkovic	Art Unit 2812

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 February 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-7 and 9-16 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 1-5 and 11-16 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 6,7,9 and 10 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 11 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.

If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.

12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).

a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Doubl Patenting

Claim 11 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 1. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 6-7 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohnuma et al. in view of Okonogi. Ohnuma et al. teach a method of manufacturing a semiconductor device, comprising:

The process of forming a semiconductor thin film having the amorphous structure containing silicon as the main component;

the step of adding metal to said semiconductor thin film having the amorphous structure;

the process of reforming said semiconductor thin film having the amorphous structure into the crystalline semiconductor thin film containing silicon as the main component by a first heat treatment;

the process of forming an island-like insulating film;

the process of adding a nonmetal element or ions of the nonmetal element to said crystalline semiconductor thin film with said island-like insulating film as a mask to form a region in which the nonmetal element or the ions of the nonmetal element have been added to said crystalline semiconductor thin film;

the process of subjecting said crystalline semiconductor thin film to a second heat treatment to getter said metal for the region to which said nonmetal element or the ions of said nonmetal element have been added.

See Figs. 4A through 4E and column 7, starting at line 28. Please note that the island-like insulating film effectively serves as a mask over said crystalline semiconductor film. Ohnuma et al. fail to teach using argon as the nonmetal gettering element. Okonogi teaches using argon for gettering heavy metal elements from a silicon substrate (Col. 1, lines 42-45). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use argon, since Okonogi teaches that the inert gases are effective gettering agents.

With regard to claim 7, Ohnuma et al. teach nickel. With regard to claim 10, as stated above, the mask is the insulating film.

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohnuma et al. Though Ohnuma et al. do not teach the specific acceleration voltage and

implantation dosage, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to optimize these parameters to maximize performance.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-5 and 11-16 are allowed.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Prior art of record fails to teach the method of gettering a metal catalyst from a silicon layer that was crystallized through the use of the catalyst, where the mask used for the implantation of the gettering nonmetal ions consists of a shape having multiple polygonal edges to thereby increase the area through which the metal catalyst atoms come into contact with the gettering agent.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Viktor Simkovic whose telephone number is 703-308-6170. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 9:00 - 6:00, except every other Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Niebling can be reached on 703-308-3325. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-308-7722 for regular communications and 703-308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1782.


Viktor Simkovic
April 7, 2003


John F. Niebling
Supervisory Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800